

**Law Enforcement Division  
Bi-Weekly Field Report  
10/14/13 – 10/27/13**

**DISTRICT 1**

CO Trey Luce was patrolling western Marquette County when he encountered an unregistered ORV. CO Luce also observed blood on the back of the ORV and the operator said he shot a deer with his bow and arrow. The operator explained that the registration was back at his camp. CO Luce followed the subject back to camp where he located a skinned out deer wrapped in a tarp in the bed of a pickup truck. The subject retrieved a used ORV registration decal from inside the camp along with his unvalidated archery deer tag. He explained how he had peeled the ORV decal off an ORV that he had sold this summer. The subject was ticketed for failing to validate and attach his kill tag and given a warning for the unregistered ORV.

CO Doug Hermanson tracked down a subject who had posted pictures on a social network site of two bucks that he shot last year. The pictures showed a seven point and a 10 point buck. A check of the retail sales system revealed that the subject had purchased a firearm license and later purchased an archery license. The site indicated that one deer was taken in rifle season and the other in muzzleloader season. As the hunter had not purchased a combination deer license, he was in violation of the one buck rule. One set of antlers were seized and the subject was charged with taking an overlimit of antlered deer.

CO Brian Bacon worked a late night patrol to target illegal deer hunting activity. While conducting surveillance on a camp, CO Bacon witnessed a subject shoot a deer from the camp with a crossbow. The subject had a lighted bait pile and shot the deer from the back window of the camp. CO Bacon contacted the shooter and seized the deer, a crossbow and loaded .22 rifle.

CO Grant Emery contacted a group of bird hunters in Gogebic County. The subjects stated that they were big fans of the game warden shows on television, and that it was neat to be checked in the field. CO Emery cleared the contact without any violations, but it didn't take long for CO Emery to come across game violations a short distance down the road. The CO contacted a subject with a loaded firearm on his ORV. Turns out he was part of the original contact group and was returning to meet up with his hunting party. Enforcement action was taken.

**DISTRICT 2**

COs Jeff Panich and Kevin Postma responded to a complaint of a missing hunter with possible medical issues. The individual had been bird hunting into the afternoon when he found himself lost. The individual was able to hear the COs and other emergency personnel sirens and walk to safety without any issues.

CO Jeff Panich contacted a group of three subjects waterfowl hunting near the Mackinac Bridge. CO Panich checked licenses and birds. When checking the shotguns, one of the hunters confessed that he hadn't had time to put a plug in his gun this season. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeff Panich contacted a group of waterfowl hunters. After checking all licenses, birds and guns, CO Panich observed something floating a short distance from the blind. CO Panich retrieved a Cormorant from the water and asked who had shot the bird. One of the hunters confessed and stated that he was able to shoot Cormorants under a Federal Permit that had been issued. CO Panich explained that there are certain locations, dates and times on the permits and that waterfowl season definitely isn't the time.

While on patrol CO Kyle Publiski observed fresh ORV tracks through the woods. CO Publiski followed the fresh tracks on foot for over a mile when he noticed a deer hanging in a tree approximately 15 feet off the ground. CO Publiski lowered the deer to the ground and found that the deer license was not validated. CO Publiski continued on the track and came across an individual cutting down trees to make a larger shooting lane. CO Publiski asked the individual about the deer and the hunter said he had shot the deer over two miles away from where it was hanging. He further explained that they bring the deer out here to process them. CO Publiski asked the hunter why he had not validated the license and the hunter didn't have a response. A ticket was issued for the tagging violation and warnings were given for cutting trees on state land.

CO Kyle Publiski was northbound on the highway when he observed a vehicle backing up against the flow of traffic and pulling into the oncoming lane in reverse, nearly running a semi-truck off the road. CO Publiski contacted the young operator who indicated that he had forgotten something at home. A ticket was issued for careless driving.

CO Mike Hammill contacted a bear hunter who had an illegal bait site. Trash had been scattered all across state land in the area. The hunter admitted to knowing better and that he should have never done it. A ticket was issued.

While on routine patrol CO Mike Hammill came across a group of hunters on ORVs. All but one of the ORVs stopped. CO Hammill immediately contacted the one ORV that failed to stop and found that the operator had failed to license his ORV. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jerry Fitzgibbon investigated a vehicle parked on state land that was blocking the road. After a brief check of the area CO Fitzgibbon located a father and son hunting party in a tree stand, neither wearing hunter orange. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Robert Crisp contacted two people hauling firewood on a two track in the AuTrain area. Upon making contact, CO Crisp observed an uncased crossbow on the passenger seat of the truck. The passenger stated that he had just purchased the

crossbow and was able to provide a receipt from a local sporting goods store. CO Crisp asked both occupants if there were any more weapons in the vehicle and the driver stated that there may be a loaded .45 pistol behind his seat. CO Crisp checked behind the driver's seat and located a loaded and uncased .45 and an uncased .9 mm pistol. Further investigation revealed that both guns were also unregistered. Both pistols were seized and enforcement action taken.

CO Michael Evink was on patrol in the Manistique area when he observed dark black smoke near a residence. Upon investigation CO Evink located the homeowner and found that he was burning a very large pile of old roofing material and insulation. CO Evink made the owner put the fire out and then took enforcement action.

CO Michael Evink responded to a call of an overturned vessel and people in the water. When CO Evink arrived on scene he found that all persons were out of the water and that some were being treated for hypothermia. CO Evink found that the subjects were duck hunters and that they had overloaded their vessel with people, equipment and dogs, causing the vessel to roll over. After a short time the sunken vessel and most of the hunting equipment was retrieved.

### **DISTRICT 3**

CO Eric Bottorff conducted surveillance on salmon snaggers after receiving a complaint. The CO watched the group of three subjects snag and attempt to give away their snagged fish. After contact, they were also found fishing with illegal gear. All three were ticketed for snagging and the illegal gear.

CO Jon Sklba received a complaint of tire burning at night. CO Sklba responded and caught two subjects burning over 20 tires, with more ready to be added to the fire. The subjects were ticketed and required to remove any unburned tires from the fire. The appropriate way to dispose of scrap tires was explained.

CO Andrea Erratt is investigating an incident where a crossbow hunter accidentally released a bolt through his own leg, while getting ready to shoot at a deer. The subject was hospitalized and released.

Sgt. Greg Drogowski investigated a recreational trespass complaint that also involved the larceny of a ladder stand and trail camera. Three suspects were identified by a prior trail camera photograph. Interviews with those subjects led to the recovery of the stolen property and a fourth suspect. Charges are pending.

CO Andrea Albert contacted a duck hunter who failed to purchase his federal waterfowl stamp and still had his shotgun loaded while walking out of his hunting area well after shooting hours. The hunter also had a 20 gauge shotgun in the trunk of his vehicle which was loaded and pointed at the driver's seat. The hunter was ticked for the violations.

CO Kelly Ross received a complaint of late night shooting on state land; when he arrived in the area he located the suspect vehicle and a traffic stop was made. CO Ross located a loaded rifle and a quantity of marijuana. Charges are being sought with the prosecutor's office.

CO Kelly Ross was attempting to serve an arrest warrant at a suspect's residence and while knocking on the door he observed a marijuana plant by the front steps. CO Ross contacted sheriff deputies and the local drug team and executed a search warrant on the house and located numerous live marijuana plants, other narcotics, handguns and long guns. Additional charges are being sought through the prosecutor's office.

CO Steve Speigl, while checking waterfowl hunters, overheard the local deputies trying to find a suspect who rolled a car and fled the scene. Being in the immediate area, CO Speigl made a pass through town and spotted the suspect. The suspect, after knowing he had been seen, attempted to flee again. CO Speigl was able to chase the suspect down on foot and detain until turning over to deputies for further questioning.

CO Bill Webster was patrolling the Devil's River when he observed an individual using a net to catch salmon. In a short period of time he managed to net two fish. Contact with the subject was made and he admitted to catching fish over the past two weeks with the net. CO Webster seized the fish and the fillets of the fish which were caught earlier and ticketed him for taking fish by an illegal method.

CO Bill Webster and Sgt. Joe Molnar investigated a complaint of an individual trespassing and driving through a food plot doing extensive damage to the food plot. While looking at the damage the COs located corn and apples scattered throughout the food plot. After a short conversation the landowner admitted to enhancing his food plot. He was ticketed for baiting in a closed county.

CO Bill Webster was watching three anglers snagging salmon on the Thunder Bay River. After observing the anglers snagging for a short time he contacted them and ticketed each of them for retaining foul hooked fish. They were charged restitution for 52 pounds of salmon.

#### **DISTRICT 4**

CO Steve Converse responded to a trespass complaint where a landowner had located a bait pile and trail camera on his property. CO Converse located a tree stand and gut pile from a deer also on the complainant's property. With limited information, CO Converse was able to make contact with the owner of the tree stand who admitted to shooting a six point deer while trespassing, and with only an antlerless license. Further investigation led to another suspect who had shot a deer on the property and never placed his tag on it.

CO Sean Kehoe participated in a weeklong trial against a subject who fired a rifle at him and other responding deputies when they responded to a complaint of shots fired this

past April. The trial concluded with the subject being found guilty by the jury of seven out of nine counts. The guilty verdicts were for two counts of attempted murder, three counts of assault with a dangerous/deadly weapon, one count of shooting at a building and one count of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Sentencing has been set for November.

CO Sam Koscinski responded to a complaint where a hunter shot a deer that was a sublegal buck in one of the new Antler Point Restriction (APR), counties. The subject transported the deer home to the Muskegon area before CO Koscinski could make contact with him. CO Chris Simpson was notified and was able to assist with the investigation. CO Simpson was able to seize the deer with enforcement action taken.

CO Holly Pennoni responded to a complaint from a hunter whose bird dog got caught in a 220 Conibear trap while they were out hunting on public land. Unfortunately, the dog died as a result of being in the body gripping trap. CO Pennoni was able to track down the trap owner and the investigation led to several more illegally set traps on dry land. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Carla Soper reports that a bench trial concluded against a subject she contacted back in April who had taken a deer illegally. In April, CO Soper responded to a residence where a deer was hanging without a tag. The suspect advised that he had hit the deer with his car. CO Soper investigated his claims and did not find any evidence to back his story. CO Soper submitted her investigative report to the prosecutor who issued an arrest warrant. The subject was found guilty of taking a deer without a license and charged \$1,000 restitution for the deer along with \$325 fines and costs.

CO Brian Brosky was patrolling an area where he had received complaints of illegal shining after 11:00 p.m. when he observed a vehicle stopping at intersections and head-lighting fields. CO Brosky followed the vehicle for several miles before making a traffic stop. In addition to shining after hours, it was determined that the passenger of the vehicle had multiple warrants for his arrest and had been sought after by local deputies for several months. Additional units responded to the scene to assist with lodging the subject.

CO Jeff Ginn and Sgt. Mike Bomay were patrolling Brooks Creek when they located three juveniles attempting to net salmon in the creek. Upon making contact with the juveniles, it was determined that they had successfully netted two salmon and threw them up on the bank. The juveniles were followed home to grandmother's house who thought the children were out fishing. CO Ginn explained the rules of the closed stream, that netting fish was illegal and the seriousness of their actions. CO Ginn provided the juveniles with hunting and fishing guides and explained to them the importance of following the rules.

CO Jeff Ginn was contacted regarding a hunter harassment complaint. CO Ginn decided to pose as a hunter on a stand in the area where the harassment had been taking place. Within minutes of being on stand, CO Ginn experienced harassment in

the form of the neighboring property owner driving his vehicle along the property line waving and smiling at him. The suspect was also observed transporting a loaded, uncased firearm which was later recklessly discharged by the suspect. Upon contact with the suspect, CO Ginn was able to obtain a confession from the subject who explained he was trying to prevent the complainant from harvesting any deer. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeff Ginn contacted a group of archery hunters who had successfully harvested an antlerless deer. Upon contact, CO Ginn observed the untagged, field dressed deer in the bed of a pickup truck. CO Ginn was able to determine that the subjects had multiple opportunities to tag the deer but had not done so. A ticket was issued for failure to immediately validate and attach a kill tag to their deer.

CO Jeff Ginn responded to assist a Sgt. from the sheriff department who had executed a traffic stop on a vehicle for an equipment violation. The Sgt. observed blood on the hands of the driver and determined that the man had shot a deer in Newaygo County. Further questioning by the Sgt. revealed that the subject had never tagged the deer. After arriving at the location of the traffic stop, CO Ginn then followed the subject back to his camp to investigate further. CO Ginn was able to locate an untagged deer inside a barn at the suspect's family farm. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Brian Lebel received a complaint in Osceola County of shots fired two evenings in a row. CO Lebel patrolled the area and contacted a resident near the complaint location. CO Lebel questioned the homeowner and was able to obtain admission of a deer hanging in a shed that was killed by his son. Upon inspecting the deer for a valid license, it was determined that the son had not purchased a hunting license. CO Lebel also located evidence that the deer may have been taken with a firearm. CO Lebel contacted the son and confirmed the deer was taken illegally with a firearm. The deer was seized and a ticket was issued.

CO Brian Lebel received a complaint of a deer carcass dumped on state land. CO Lebel patrolled to the area and upon investigating the carcass, was able to determine that the deer was skinned from the shoulders up and the head was removed. Follow-up investigation by checking area taxidermy businesses led to a deer head and cape that matched perfectly to the carcass that was dumped. The suspect was contacted and interviewed, and admitted to dumping the deer remains. A ticket was issued for littering.

CO Troy VanGelderren was patrolling the White River on foot when he observed two subjects near the river. One subject was attempting to snag salmon with illegal fishing gear while the other subject stood as the lookout. CO VanGelderren was able to get close enough to both individuals to observe the lookout smoking marijuana and share it with his fishing partner. The CO contacted the pair and located a freshly snagged salmon hidden in the weeds. Enforcement action was taken on the two subjects including being in possession of marijuana, snagging salmon, illegal fishing gear and fishing without fishing licenses.

CO Mike Wells worked a group patrol at Tippy Dam on the Manistee River and issued tickets for snagging salmon, fishing with illegal gear and retaining foul hooked fish. In addition to issuing multiple tickets, over 100 pounds of illegally taken salmon was seized and charged restitution.

## **DISTRICT 5**

CO John Huspen was on waterfowl patrol and observed individuals operating a boat on Big Creek Impoundment. While watching them, he witnessed the individuals shoot from the moving boat at passing waterfowl. CO Huspen contacted the individuals and found that in addition to having a loaded gun in a moving vessel, the subjects did not have any life preservers. Tickets were issued.

CO Matt Liestenfeltz received a complaint of shots fired. The complainant witnessed a vehicle slow rolling along a two track and heard gunshots come from the car. The witness was able to get a license plate number. CO Liestenfeltz responded to the address of the license plate registration and, while walking up to the front door, was able to see inside the suspect car. He observed two uncased shotguns and an uncased bow. After conducting interviews, the suspects confessed to road hunting and allowed a search of the car. The two shotguns were loaded. Tickets were issued.

CO Chuck McPherson was on patrol on state land and observed a vehicle slow rolling on a two track. The CO followed the vehicle for a while to observe their activity. While behind the vehicle, the officer witnessed the passenger of the vehicle throw a beer can out the window. CO McPherson contacted the operator and occupants and a ticket for littering was issued.

CO John Huspen received a hunter harassment complaint from a waterfowl hunter. The complainant indicated the suspects urinated on the tires of his truck. CO Huspen contacted the suspects who were also waterfowl hunting. The young hunters apologized for their behavior, and were written a ticket for hunting out of an illegal blind.

CO Chuck McPherson contacted a hunter in a blind he had previously located on public land. The subject had an illegal blind, had placed bait for deer prior to October 1, was using more than the two gallons of bait allowed for deer, and at the time he was contacted, did not have his hunting licenses with him. In addition, the subject had a restricted driver's license and drove his vehicle to the location in violation of his restrictions. CO McPherson issued tickets and advised the subject he could not drive his vehicle.

CO John Huspen contacted a hunter who was hunting out of an illegal blind, had cut illegal shooting lanes on public land, was using more than the two gallons of bait allowed to hunt deer, and was using screws penetrating the bark of the trees. Tickets were issued.

COs Chuck McPherson and John Huspen were on patrol and contacted hunters in illegal blinds previously located on state land. The individuals had also cut trees illegally and were using too much bait to hunt for deer. The COs contacted the hunters at both blinds. One individual was in possession of a .30-06 rifle and claimed to be coyote hunting. The second individual was in possession of a concealed pistol but failed to inform the COs he was carrying with a valid CPL. Tickets were issued to the hunters.

CO Brian Olsen responded to a complaint involving illegal activity on a land locked parcel of state property. Upon investigation, the CO found one group that had established illegal ORV trails and were excessively baiting for deer. CO Olsen further located a second individual who was hunting deer without a license in addition to excessive bait.

COs Jon Warner and Mark Papineau were on salmon spawning patrol when they observed an angler using illegal tackle. After observing for a short time, the COs contacted the suspect and took enforcement action. The suspect complained that he had received a ticket for the same exact offense just one week earlier from CO Brian Olsen.

CO Steve Lockwood was investigating a trapping complaint when he located several traps that were set prior to the season opener. In addition to the closed season violation, the suspect also had additional violations, including setting 330 size body-gripping traps on dry land. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Mark Papineau received a complaint in regard to a dead deer lying in a subject's backyard. CO Papineau contacted the complainant who advised that he went to check his deer blind in the morning and located the freshly shot deer lying in his food plot. CO Papineau immediately began to back track the blood trail. After a period of time, the CO contacted an individual walking towards him on the same blood trail. The subject was surprised to see a CO in the woods. After repeated stories, the individual finally confessed to shooting the deer and never purchasing a license. The subject was ticketed for taking a deer without a license.

While on patrol, CO Mark Papineau was flagged down by an individual who was deer hunting just south of the City of Gladwin. The deer hunter stated that he was hunting from a ground blind when a vehicle full of "kids" pulled into the parking area. Moments later, the individual advised that a gun went off from the parking area and he heard the bullet fly by his head. The individual advised that he confronted the "kids" and they laughed at the incident and then walked off into the woods. CO Papineau made contact with subjects matching the description. Upon discussing the incident, CO Papineau was informed that one of the subjects was a first time hunter and the other guy was trying to show him how things are done. He continued by telling CO Papineau that he removed his .22 rifle from the trunk and proceeded to show the new hunter how to make sure the firearm is unloaded. The individual advised that the magazine was already removed from the rifle, so he pointed the barrel in the direction of the woods and pulled



the trigger. To his surprise, the gun went off. In addition, the new hunter was not wearing any hunter orange. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 6**

Sgt. Ron Kimmerly received a Report-All-Poaching (RAP) complaint where a hunter in the Shiawassee River State Game Area (SGA) saw another hunter shoot a Trumpeter Swan. Seven additional calls came in reference the shooting. Trumpeter Swans are on the endangered/threatened list. The Sgt. contacted the suspect hunter out in the field and obtained a confession but could not find the swan. After the Sgt. met the hunter back at the field office and issued a ticket, he went back into the game area to search for the swan. The Sgt. flushed the injured swan out of the thick brush, but it could not fly and appeared to have a broken wing and was bleeding from the neck. Unfortunately the swan will die somewhere in the game area.

COs Quincy Gowenlock and Dan Lee were checking waterfowl hunters in the Shiawassee River SGA when they came across a group of three hunters in possession of four hen Mallards. Enforcement action was taken. On the way out of the game area the COs were told about another group of hunters who were shooting at swans but had left the area. The COs were able to catch up with the hunters and obtain a confession.

CO Phil Hudson was on foot patrol on Hunting Access Program (HAP) property where the landowner was having several issues. CO Hudson located three subjects hunting without licenses, ORVs on HAP land, four large bait piles, five subjects who failed to register their hunt and a minor who was dropped off and left without supervision. Enforcement action was taken on all violations.

CO Joshua Wright received a complaint of a person hunting out of a golf cart for deer. CO Wright contacted the hunter who had his crossbow out of the golf cart but was holding a beer in his hand. When asked for his hunting license, the hunter did not have one. Further investigation also revealed marijuana in the golf cart. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Scott Brown responded to a complaint of waterfowl hunting after hours and located the group calling and firing shots one-half hour after hunting hours closed. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Seth Rhodea and Robert Hobkirk worked the Wildfowl Bay area checking waterfowl hunters. One group of hunters was hunting off a boat with no registration and was ticketed for the violation. Another hunter was hunting with an unplugged shotgun and no federal duck stamp. A ticket was issued.

CO Seth Rhodea contacted two young waterfowl hunters on a small secluded lake in Tuscola County. Upon checking the hunter's equipment, both firearms were found unplugged and the hunters had lead shot with them. When asked for their licenses, both hunters were unable to show the CO their licenses but insisted they had them. A quick

license check showed that the hunters did not have licenses and after continued questioning by the CO eventually admitted they were lying. Tickets were issued.

## **DISTRICT 7**

While patrolling a closed section of Bear Creek, CO Patrick McManus observed a truck that seemed out of place; several hundred yards down the road away from the creek in a hunting area. CO McManus found a single boot track that was similar to a hip boot or wader leading away from the vehicle toward the creek. As CO McManus walked through the woods, he noticed a subject coming up the bank from the creek area with a black plastic bag. When he saw the CO, he dropped the bag and kept walking toward him. After obtaining an ID and confession of taking fish by net off the closed stream, he stated he was with one other person. Two other subjects were located with a large landing net, and several fish strung across a stick each of the men were carrying. They also had a cooler with fish in it. None of the subjects had fishing licenses, were using a net to capture the fish out of a closed stream, and had illegally taken 10 fish totaling approximately 120 pounds. Enforcement action was taken.

While patrolling for illegal fish run activity along a closed stream in Allegan County, CO Patrick McManus and Sgt. Jeff Rabbers contacted two subjects operating recklessly in the Allegan SGA. The operator had a suspended license, no proof of insurance, and was operating under the influence and in possession of marijuana, had an expired registration, and had failed to transfer registration of the vehicle. When asked where they were headed in such a hurry, they stated to catch fish in Bear Creek, which is closed to fishing. A search of the vehicle showed they were on their way to snag fish with numerous articles of snagging equipment and illegal cast nets. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Chris Holmes received a complaint of two subjects killing three turkeys. After interviews and a search of one of the subject's homes, it was found that three turkeys were killed. The hunters had licenses for two turkeys, but not the third. An admission was obtained from the second hunter who stated he "got greedy" and killed the third turkey without a license.

CO Cary Foster was checking waterfowl hunters in the Ionia Recreation Area when he encountered a hunter who was new to waterfowl hunting. While interviewing the hunter, CO Foster had the hunter unload his gun and three shells were ejected. CO Foster noticed shells still in the gun and removed two more rounds in the magazine. A license check found the hunter was missing both state and federal waterfowl stamps. Enforcement action was taken for having an unplugged gun and warnings were given for license violations.

After two seasons of attempts, CO Cary Foster finally contacted the person who had placed an illegal tree stand without a name on public lands. The hunter had also been cutting trees illegally the past two seasons. CO Foster contacted the hunter this year and ticketed him for the tree stand violation.

COs BJ Goulette and Ivan Perez responded to a RAP complaint where a person heard a shot and watched a Great Blue Heron slowly descend to the ground and was found dead. The COs located the bird which appeared to be shot and followed their lead to the source of the shooting, a nearby farm. The COs contacted a farmer at the location who quickly admitted to shooting the Heron. He reasoned the bird had been drinking at a water trough used by his cattle and there was the chance of disease transmission. CO Goulette asked why he did not just shoot to scare away the bird and he responded that he did just that and the bird flew away. He then shot again and killed the bird on the chance that it might return. The farmer was ticketed for taking a non-game bird.

CO Ivan Perez observed an angler on the Black River hook and drag a salmon up the river bank one day while conducting surveillance. Believing the salmon was foul hooked, CO Perez approached the angler only to have him kick the fish back into the river as he approached. A discussion took place about his method and retaining fish not hooked in the mouth. Two days later, CO Perez found the same angler fishing with a weight below a treble hook attempting to snag fish. The angler was ticketed for the violation, making this his third offense for snagging.

CO Perez investigated a RAP complaint of a dumped deer carcass which had the head and cape removed. After examining the carcass, CO Perez photographed the scene and went to a local taxidermy studio to make an inquiry. The taxidermist advised they had caped this 14 point buck out the previous day. CO Perez called the associated hunter based on taxidermy studio records, asking when he could come and clean up his mess. The hunter arrived to meet CO Perez at the scene and he removed the carcass while explaining he had lost the archery taken animal long enough that the meat went bad. After leaving the taxidermist, he thought he had dumped the carcass in a remote location. A littering ticket was issued by CO Perez and the hunter removed the carcass from the property.

CO Chris Simpson investigated an anonymous complaint phoned into the RAP line reporting a subject had several deer in his freezer and had taken an illegal bobcat. CO Simpson went to the residence and conducted an interview of the suspect while examining his four current valid deer tags. During the interview the suspect denied taking any deer yet this fall until CO Simpson pointed out blood on the tailgate of his truck. Further discussion led to an admission of taking a doe and failing to tag the animal, even though he possessed a valid license. Noting a smell of marijuana, CO Simpson continued to question the subject and eventually seized a lock box containing a quantity of marijuana. The subject was ticketed for failing to immediately tag his deer. The investigation continues.

CO Dave Rodgers responded to a complaint in the Canonsburg SGA of ORV use and shots fired. Eventually CO Rodgers heard a vehicle moving and attempted to contact the operator of a two-seat UTV. The driver, who was wearing a holster, refused to stop the vehicle and rapidly backed away. Continued investigation with sheriff's deputies led to the suspect's residence, and a telephone negotiation with the suspect, who agreed to surrender himself on a nearby road. Officers had also determined the suspect was a

convicted felon and wanted on outstanding warrants. After the suspect failed to surrender, COs Rodgers and Steve Orange located the UTV during a foot search of the area and brought the machine to the roadway for impound. Warrants are being sought at this time for numerous violations.

CO Brad Brewer and Sgt. Zach Doss were on patrol when they contacted two hunters leaving the woods after dark. One of the hunters had shot a doe approximately three hours earlier and had failed to tag the deer, even after retrieving a deer cart and bringing the deer to the road. A ticket was issued for fail to immediately tag the deer.

CO Andy Bauer and Sgt. Zach Doss checked two anglers as they were returning in their boat from fishing on the St. Joseph River. It was discovered that the boat owner did not have any life preservers for the boat, or a fire extinguisher, and had failed to change the boat registration after moving back to Michigan. CO Bauer issued the owner a ticket for failing to have proper life preservers and explained the other violations, along with giving the subject a marine law guide for his education.

## **DISTRICT 8**

CO Derek Miller patrolled Lenawee County following up on complaints and located two unsupervised juveniles operating an ORV on the roadway. Due to the age of the operators, CO Miller followed them back to their residence and contacted the parents. A ticket was issued for allowing a minor to operate unsupervised. Warnings included operating on the roadway, no helmets or eye protection, carry passenger on ORV not designed for passengers, and no ORV safety certificate.

CO Derek Miller heard several volleys of shots related to waterfowl hunting and received a complaint of multiple shots by goose hunters. CO Miller located a subject operating an ORV on the roadway who was with the hunting party. The subject led CO Miller to the rest of the group, where contact was made with another vehicle. During an initial investigation, CO Miller was checking licenses with several members of the group. CO Miller then observed other subjects throwing geese into another part of the field, in an attempt to hide them. CO Miller contacted these hunters and obtained licenses and identification. CO Miller was able to locate the hidden geese in the adjacent corn field, along with lead shot. In the end CO Miller seized 21 geese over the limit, issued tickets for using unplugged shotguns, and other violations of possession of lead shot, uncased shotguns upon motor vehicles, and minor licensing violations.

COs Derek Miller and Jason Smith worked a complaint of subjects hunting in an area closed to hunting. After a long foot patrol the COs located several hunting points, along with trail cameras and equipment stashed in the woods. The COs were able to obtain identification of the subjects off of the trail cameras, and after a short investigation, obtained a full confession from the involved party. Warrants are being sought through the prosecutor's office.

CO Jason Smith was patrolling the Sharonville SGA when he saw a small game hunter run from the woods back to the vehicle hoping to leave before the CO could contact him. CO Smith was able to make contact with the hunter who was in dark clothing, black face paint and wearing a squirrel hat. CO Smith asked about the hat and the hunter stated that he had made it out of five squirrels that he had shot in the past. CO Smith asked the hunter if he thought it was a good idea to be walking around state land (while other small game hunters were out) with a squirrel on his head and not wearing hunter orange. The hunter admitted that it probably was not a good idea. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Daniel Prince responded to a trespass complaint in progress. As CO Prince arrived and set up to observe the trespassers who were waterfowl hunting, he also observed them returning after dark with no navigation lights on their vessel. When contact was made one subject had an unplugged gun and another one was without a federal waterfowl stamp. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Pete Purdy contacted two waterfowl hunters on a boat. They advised that there was no need to check them because they knew what they are doing and had hunted waterfowl for several years and were 100% legal. They displayed correct hunting licenses, all steel shot, plugged shotguns, and life jackets. When CO Purdy asked about the vessel registration they advised that they had forgotten to register the watercraft.

CO Pete Purdy assisted a local police officer with a 911 call of a deer hunter trespassing on private property. The 911 caller observed the subject drive back into his field, exit the vehicle wearing all camouflage and carrying a crossbow. The officers arrived on scene and contacted the hunter. He advised that several years ago he was given verbal permission from a family member to hunt the property. However, he hadn't contacted the family in several years and the person who had given him verbal permission was now in a nursing home. The subject hadn't purchased a 2013 deer hunting license. In addition his driver's license and vehicle registration were expired and he admitted to transporting the crossbow in the motor vehicle uncased with an arrow nocked. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Pete Purdy contacted two groups of waterfowl hunters who had returned to the Lobdell Lake boat launch an hour after sunset. As CO Purdy spoke with the waterfowl hunters they heard a watercraft coming into the boat launch but couldn't see it because it was dark and the vessel didn't have any navigation lights. An automobile with a personal watercraft (PWC) trailer pulled up to the launch and backed the trailer into the water. The vessel in question was a PWC. CO Purdy contacted both subjects. A father who was driving the vehicle with the trailer had his 16 year old son operate the PWC across the lake back to the boat launch. The 16 year old also didn't have a personal flotation device (PFD). The juvenile advised he was just following his father's instructions. The father advised he wasn't thinking of the safety issues. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Shane Webster discovered a familiar name while searching a popular online big buck contest. The subject had reported killing a nine point whitetail on October 1st. A check of the retail sales system revealed that the subject had not purchased a deer license until after hunting hours ended on the 1st. CO Webster interviewed the subject who confessed to taking the deer without a license. During the contact CO Webster noted the strong smell of marijuana. The subject surrendered a bag of marijuana to CO Webster. The drugs, antlers, and venison were seized from the subject and charges will be pending through the prosecutor's office.

CO Todd Thorn responded to a safety zone complaint and found the location, but no one was in the tree stand. Just after clearing that complaint, CO Thorn observed a truck parked down the road and learned that the registered owner did not have a hunting license, but saw that there was a compound bow case under the vehicle. CO Thorn followed foot tracks into a wooded area and found a man hunting with a bow. The man said that he had purchased a license, but left it in his truck. Once CO Thorn and the hunter arrived at the truck the man admitted to not having purchased a license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Rich Nickols assisted local police officers with a call regarding an overdue hunter and an abandoned vehicle. The hunter was located deceased on the Rose Lake Wildlife Area. The hunter apparently fell about 20 feet while climbing down from his tree stand.

While working a late night shining patrol, CO Rich Nickols observed a vehicle slowly travelling down a road and periodically casting a light at midnight. CO Nickols stopped the vehicle and found the passenger in possession of a .22 caliber rifle in the front seat. The rifle had a scope on it that was modified with a mini-mag light and laser, each controlled by pressure switches. No evidence was found of a deer being shot. The weapon was seized and both subjects were issued tickets.

While at the district office, CO Rich Nickols took a walk-in complaint of possible deer poaching. The complainant said that someone had dumped two deer behind a fence at a vacant house. CO Nickols went to question a possible subject and located the hind quarters of a deer in the back of a pickup. After some lengthy questioning, locating the vehicle involved, and taking blood samples of all the deer involved, the subject confessed to shooting two deer with a firearm the previous night. The firearm was seized and charges will be sought through the prosecutor's office.

Sgt. Troy Bahlau made an off duty arrest of two subjects who were caught in the act of keying vehicles in a parking lot. The female subject, while being placed under arrest, cut Sgt. Bahlau across the neck with the key being used to damage the vehicles. Three felony charges have been issued for minor destruction of property over \$1000 on two vehicles and resist and obstruct causing injuries, along with drunk and disorderly on both subjects.

## **DISTRICT 9**

CO Kris Kiel received a complaint of a boat blind chasing after and shooting cormorants. The boat blind was not stationary, and it was not hunting over duck decoys. CO Kiel met with the complainant at Lake St. Clair Metro Park who agreed to take him out to talk with the suspect. CO Kris Kiel contacted the subject and found that he was a first time duck hunter, new to the sport. The subject had no idea what kind of ducks he was shooting at; he thought they were just black ducks and not cormorants. The young hunter was also without the proper licenses to hunt waterfowl. After educating the youth about duck identification and cormorants, enforcement action was taken.

While checking waterfowl hunters on Harsens Island, CO Todd Szyska encountered a vessel operating in the channel with no MC numbers visible. Upon checking the hunters, further examination of the vessel revealed that all of the numbers, as well as the registration sticker, had been completely painted over with camouflage and leaf pattern paint. By looking at the vessel in different angles the CO was able to determine and run the numbers. The vessel had not been registered since 2010 and the hunter stated that it was the second time he had brought it into the unit and used it this waterfowl season. Enforcement action was taken.

While wading through the corn flooded areas of the Harsens Island Management Unit, CO Ben Lasher came upon a small boat operating into a hunting zone. CO Lasher contacted the hunter and noted that the vessel had an expired boat registration, that there was no life jacket, and that the subject was in possession of metal containers (cans). Enforcement action was taken.

CO Ken Kovach worked late duck hunters in northern St. Clair County and set up surveillance on them. The subjects hunted waterfowl until 30 minutes after the legal shooting hours. In fact, the subjects tried to shoot at and missed several wood ducks coming in. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Mark Ennett responded to a RAP complaint of a person possessing a pet raccoon. CO Ennett contacted the owner and found that he had a pet raccoon that he claimed was purchased over the Internet. He also said he had done more Internet research, and thought Michigan allowed such animals as pets. The subject neglected to learn about the entire Captive Wild Animal Permit system, and did not have an approved facility. CO Ennett issued a ticket for having a captive wild animal without a valid permit.

Checking waterfowl hunters coming out of the managed hunting area at Pointe Mouillee, CO Dan Walzak contacted two individuals, one with an unplugged shotgun and the other without a small game license. CO Walzak asked the first subject about the lack of a plug, and the subject replied that he was careful to use only three shot-shells at a time. When the CO asked the second subject why he did not have a small game license, he responded that the worker at the check station mentioned it to him and told him to make sure he acquired the license before entering his zone. The

subject added that they went to a local sporting goods shop to purchase a license but the store was not yet open. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Mike Drexler was contacted by local police officers requesting assistance with a subject who shot a hawk. Sgt. Arthur Green and CO Drexler arrived on scene shortly after receiving the call and assisted the local officers who were already on scene. The subject used a scoped pellet gun to shoot an adult Coopers Hawk. The hawk was still alive and Animal Control officers assisted in capturing it. The subject stated that he wanted to "put the hawk out of its misery" as it seemed to him to be injured. The hawk was transported to a licensed rehabilitator and taken to a veterinarian, but later euthanized due to the seriousness of the injuries. The cooperative effort between the two agencies resulted in the subject being arrested and lodged for discharging a firearm in the city limits, taking a protected non-game species, and hunting within a safety zone.

CO Mike Drexler received a RAP complaint where a subject was suspected of having an illegal deer. The subject supposedly shot two deer during the early antlerless firearm season and recently shot a doe. A computer check revealed that the subject might not have licenses for all the deer. The computer check also revealed that the subject had two outstanding misdemeanor warrants. Sgt. Arthur Green responded with CO Drexler to the subject's residence and contacted his two friends. They were in the process of butchering the deer, which did not have a validated kill tag attached. When the subject returned home he was questioned about the untagged deer and was issued a ticket for the violation and was arrested on his outstanding warrants and lodged.

Sgt. Arthur Green and COs Brandon Kieft and Ben Shively conducted surveillance on the location of a waterfowl hunting complaint in Brandon Township. The COs witnessed four hunters shooting waterfowl over a baited lake that continued for about a half hour after legal hunting hours had ended. The COs were able to contact the hunters who were in possession of four unplugged shotguns, four unsigned and unattached federal waterfowl stamps, lead shot, and eight illegally taken ducks. The hunters were also travelling in an unregistered watercraft without the proper number of PFDs and had failed to retrieve at least two birds. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Brandon Kieft was checking waterfowl hunters on Pontiac Lake when he heard multiple shots fired from a closed hunting area. CO Kieft contacted the two hunters who admitted to shooting a duck in the closed area. While checking their licenses, CO Kieft noticed that one of the hunters did not have his federal waterfowl stamp. When questioned about the stamp, the hunter began making up an elaborate story on how he must have lost it. Further questioning about when the stamp was purchased also didn't add up. When CO Kieft issued the ticket to the hunter, he eventually cleared his conscience and told the truth.

CO Brandon Kieft observed a subject in full camouflage exiting the woods carrying a shotgun. After making contact with the hunter, he claimed to have been archery deer hunting in the morning and later decided to hunt small game. His shotgun was loaded



with mostly slugs and the subject was unable to provide any piece of hunter orange clothing. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Brandon Kieft was checking a local deer processor when he observed a four point buck that had recently been dropped off. The attached hunting license belonged to a 71-year-old female who had never purchased a license prior to the 2013 season. CO Kieft saw that the deer was dropped off by her son, so he conducted a follow up interview with him. At first, the man tried to convince CO Kieft the buck had been taken with a bow and arrow by his elderly mother. However, when CO Kieft informed him that he was headed to his mother's residence to issue her a ticket for not validating her kill tag, the man broke down and confessed. He was issued a ticket for using the license of another.

CO Kris Kiel received a complaint that suspects had been shooting after hours at ducks at Wetzel State Recreation Area. CO Kris Kiel conducted surveillance at night in the complaint area. CO Kiel was able to find one hunter actively shooting at and trying to take waterfowl after the close of legal hunting hours. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Ken Kovach assisted on a call from a MSP trooper in the central portion of St. Clair County. The trooper had called out that a vehicle was either shooting out the window of his vehicle or was shooting at the trooper. It was determined that the subject was shooting at the trooper. The subject was apprehended and placed into custody.

While working late waterfowl hunters at St. John's Marsh, CO Ken Kovach set up surveillance on a group of hunters who continued to call out at ducks after legal shooting hours. CO Kovach witnessed ducks swooping down into the subjects' calls but they could not get shots off. When approached by CO Kovach, 15 minutes after legal shooting hours, the hunters still had their weapons loaded and were still attempting to call ducks. Other violations included an unplugged shotgun and an unsigned federal stamp. Enforcement action was taken.

While working late waterfowl hunters at St. John's Marsh CO Ken Kovach contacted a group of hunters walking the dike system. When stopping them to check them, the hunters stated that there was no need to be checked as they had been checked by another CO a day or so ago. CO Ken Kovach went ahead with the check and produced an unplugged shotgun from the spokesperson of the group. Enforcement action was taken.

While working a shining patrol in the early morning hours in St. Clair County, CO Ken Kovach observed a vehicle actively shining cut corn fields. After following the subject for several miles, the suspect vehicle continually shined fields stopping at certain ones that had deer in them. The suspect vehicle was finally pulled over at approximately 2:00 a.m. and was found to be occupied by four individuals, a spotlight, and an uncased rifle in the back seat. One of the four individuals also had a warrant for his arrest. The suspects admitted that they were in pursuit of trying to kill a big buck and they had passed up all the fields they stopped at due to the fact that the deer in the fields were all

too small. One subject even commented that the reason they had four guys in the truck was because they needed the extra manpower in case they were successful with getting a deer. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 21**

On October 21, 2013 a subject entered a guilty plea to a misdemeanor unauthorized wetland dredging/filling violation in Mason County. Total fines and costs were \$580. The criminal investigation began in January 2013. The DEQ Cadillac Office received a report of a large piece of heavy machinery stuck in a wetland adjacent to the Lincoln River in Mason County. The reporting party forwarded a cell phone picture of the snow covered excavator stuck in a large pool of ice covered water in a partially clear cut cedar swamp. DEQ staff notified Detective Erick Thorson from the DNR Environmental Investigation Section (EIS) in Bay City. Det. Thorson and DEQ staff responded and found that the excavator had been removed but also discovered activity involving illegal wetland dredging and filling. The property owner claimed he was performing logging operations at the site and the dredging and filling activity occurred as a result of getting the excavator stuck and removed. There had been past history involving DEQ investigations into wetlands violations at this site. Det. Thorson and DEQ staff returned to the site in May 2013 to further document the violation without snow cover. The investigation was then presented to the Mason County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for prosecution.